THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government are aware of the agreement signed by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrghyzstan & Pakistan recently, Both Kazakhstan and Kyrghyzstan have stated that they want to expand trade & economic cooperation with India, and it is unlikely that the proposed agreement will have significant negative impact on our trade with these countries.

(c) India has been in touch with the Governments of Iran and the Russian Federation to make optimum use of port, rail and road networks in these countries for developing our trade with Central Asian countries. Government are optimistic about the potential of these routes to Central Asia. Government also keep under constant review the utilisation of our aviation links with Central Asian countries for trade.

Contracts for Export of Wheat and Rice

2019. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE *ber* pleased to state:

(a) whether some contracts have been signed for export of various varieties of wheat and rice during 1994-95 and 1995-96;

(b) if so, the details thereof with terms of such agreements and names of sources of export;

(c) whether Government propose to export pulses during the current financial year or next financial year;

(d) if so, the details thereof with initiatives taken in this regard alongwith its objectives;

(e) whether Government also propose to take some steps to boost country's growth of wheat, rice and pulses to discourage export and to check hoarding tendencies of traders; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The details of contracts signed by various Govt, agencies for supply of wheat and rice during 1994-95 and 1995-96 are as under:—

(i) FCI have signed a contract for supply of 30,000 MTs of super fine rice with the Govt, of Nepal for delivery by 31.5.95.

(ii) STC have signed/executed contracts for export of rice to Bangladesh and wheat to United Arab Emirates the details of which are as under:

Year	Quantity MT	Value Rs. Lakh	Shipment Period
Rice			
1994-95	2,200	193	20th March, 1995
	7,800	583	31st March, 1995
	6,400	495	31st March, 1995
	25,000	2074	31st March, 1995
1995-96	25,000	2074	30th April, J995
Wheat (Non-Durum)			
1994-95	50,000	2385	30th April, 1995

(iii) MMTC have signed a contract for export of 1748 MTs of Non-Basmati rice for value of Rs. 1.46 crores to Turkey.

(c) to (f) A ceiling of 10,000 MTs has been fixed for export of pulses in 1994-95. It is the policy of the Govt, to encourage export of agricultural items subject to domestic availability and demand. To enhance domestic production and to generate exportable surpluses, a number of measures have been initiated such as supply of high yielding variety of seeds to growers, enhancing area under assured irrigation, encouraging use of fertilisers, ensuring remunerative prices to farmers, etc. As far as curbing of hoarding is concerned, State Governments are empowered to take •necessary action under the prevalent laws.

Export and Import of Diamonds, Gems and Jewellery

2020. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether large quantity of diamonds, gems and jewellery has been exported during the last three financial years;

(b) if so, details of each item with names of exporter, country-wise and foreign exchange earned separately during each year;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a large quantity of diamonds, gems and jewellery has been imported during the last three financial years;

(d) if so, details of each item with names of importers country-wise and foreign exchange s"pent separately during each year;

(e) what is the policy of Government regarding import and export of gems, diamonds and jewellery;

(f) whether Government propose to provide incentives to exporters of these items;

(g) whether Government also propose to develop this industry on large scale, scientifically to boost export of these items; and

(h) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House, *{see* below)

(c) Yes Sir.

(d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House *(see* below)

(e) to (h) Gem and Jewellery is a thrust sector of our exports. Govt, has provided facilities, under various schemes specified in Chapter VIII of the Export-Import Policy, for the duty free import of rough diamonds precious metals, rough coloured gemstones and other raw materials either in advance with an export obligation or as replenishment after exports. Participation in exhibitions abroad and exchange of business delegations is encouraged. Exporters of gem and Jewellery enjoy the same benefits as exporters in other sectors.

The Govt, have taken many steps for enncouraging the development of the Industry and boost the exports from this sector. In order to facilitate technological upgradation of the industry import of a wide range of items of machinery, equipment and tools required for the gem and jewellery trade at a concessional *duty* of 25% is allowed to the registered exporters of gem and jewellery and cooperative societies of goldsmiths and artisans. The Govt, also encdurages design and product development through Jewellery Product Development Centres and training of artisans through the Indian Diamond Institute.